

WEST  
FELICIANA  
PARISH



# WEST FELICIANA



# PARISH

*“...the health of a community is a shared responsibility of many entities, organizations and interests in the community, including health services delivery organizations, public health agencies, other public and private entities and the people of a community.”*

– Institute of Medicine. 1996. *Healthy Communities: New Partnerships for the Future of Public Health*. National Academy Press. p. 12



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# West Feliciana Parish

## History<sup>1</sup>

This beautiful, rural parish was created on February 17, 1824, by a division of the original Feliciana Parish. It is steeped in history, still in evidence in the many antebellum homes and buildings. Feliciana means “happy land.”

John James Audubon, the famous naturalist, lived here for a short while and painted many of his Birds of American in the lovely woods near Oakley, while engaged there as a tutor in the 1820s.

Bayou Sara, below the bluffs of St. Francisville, was once a thriving river

town. Called New Valencia by the Spanish, it was one of the earliest towns in the Florida parishes, and was established as a trading post in 1790. Before 1860 it was one of the largest points between Natchez, Mississippi, and New Orleans when “cotton was king.” The boll weevil, the demise of steamboat traffic, floods, and fire combined to bring about its decline. The town charter was revoked in 1926.

St Francisville, the parish seat of government, is one of the most picturesque towns in the state and is the successor to Bayou Sara. The name is derived from a monastery build by Capuchin friars in 1785 in honor of St. Francis of Assisi. Fort St. Reine, on the town’s present site, existed as early as 1736.

## Culture and Recreation<sup>3</sup>

Begin your quest for treasures in St. Francisville where the antebellum plantations and townhomes are gems. Continue your tour with a stop at the West Feliciana Historical Society Museum, home of the Audubon Pilgrimage each March. From there, enjoy the Walk Through History tour that interprets over 140 structures on the National Register of Historic Places, including churches: Graces Episcopal Church and Cemetery the state’s second oldest Episcopal congregation, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church designed by Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard, and the United Methodist Church whose 150-year-old belfry was moved from Bayou Sara. Only a few minutes from “downtown” is the Locust Grove Cemetery, where the first wife of Jefferson Davis is buried. The Energy Center at the Riverbend Power Plant is a treat for visitors young and old alike.

**Parish Seat<sup>1</sup>** ..... St. Francisville<sup>1</sup>

**Major Cities** (over 5,000 population)<sup>2</sup>

None



**West Feliciana Parish  
Tourist Commission**  
P.O. Box 1548  
St. Francisville, LA  
70775  
504-635-6330

**Regional Office of  
Public Health**  
James E. Gum,  
Regional Administrator  
Capitol Regional Office  
1772 Wooddale Blvd.  
Baton Rouge, LA  
70806  
225-925-7200  
225-925-7245 fax

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## Parish Population<sup>2</sup>

1990 ..... 12,915

1997 (estimate) ..... 13,505

### Breakdown of 1996 population (estimates)<sup>6</sup>

White ..... 43%

African American ..... 57%

Other ..... 1%

Male ..... 66%

Female ..... 34%

Population age 0-4 ..... 5%

Populations age 65 & over ..... 7%

## Geography and Statistics<sup>2</sup>

Average elevation ..... 115 ft.

Land area in square miles ..... 406.0

Water area in square miles<sup>4</sup> ..... 20.0

## Climate<sup>2</sup>

### Average temperatures

Annual ..... 68°

January ..... 53°

July ..... 81°

Annual average rainfall ..... 65.56 in.

## Labor Force (1995)<sup>1</sup>

Civilian ..... 3,650

Employed ..... 3,360

Unemployed ..... 290

Unemployment ..... 8.0%

## Agriculture<sup>1</sup>

Forestry, vegetable farming and beef cattle; paper mill and cannery.

## Colleges/Universities<sup>2</sup>

(within one hour commute)

Baton Rouge

Louisiana State University; Southern University

Eunice

Louisiana State University

Public Libraries<sup>5</sup> ..... 1

## Educational Attainment (1990)<sup>7</sup>

Less than 5th grade	5.3%
High school graduate or higher	57.2%
Some college or higher	25.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher	7.8%

## Major Employers (Products) and Number of Employees<sup>2</sup>

### Private Employers

River Bend Entergy Center (Nuclear Energy Utility)	880
Georgia Pacific Corporation (Pulp and Paper)	850
Crown Vantage Corporation (Paper Manufacturing)	800

### Public Employers

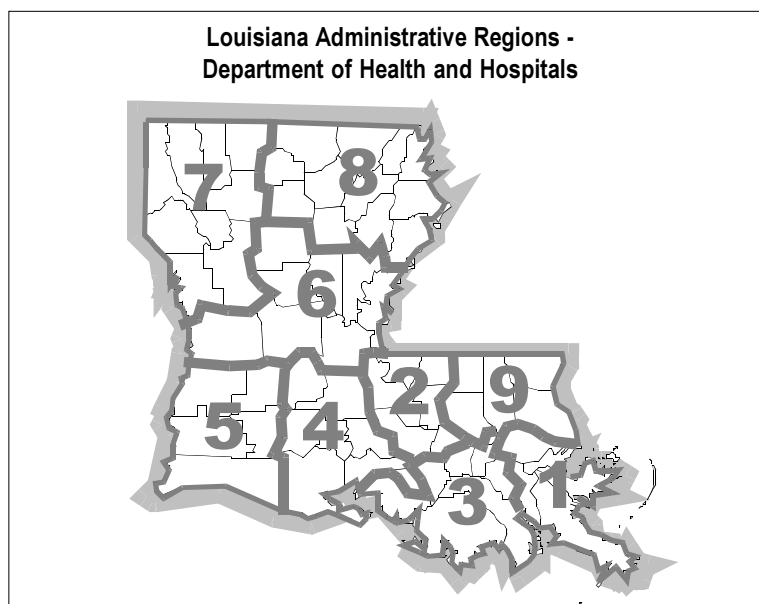
Louisiana State Penitentiary (Correctional Facility)	1,565
West Feliciana Parish School Board (Education)	355
West Feliciana Parish Hospital (Medical)	73

## Poverty and Income

Persons in poverty (1995) <sup>7</sup>	25.5%
Children under age 18 in poverty <sup>7</sup>	27.3%
Per capita income (1996) <sup>8</sup>	\$12,690


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*References*

- <sup>1</sup> Louisiana Almanac. 1997. Louisiana Almanac, Pelican Press. Gretna, LA
- <sup>2</sup> Louisiana Department of Economic Development. 1999. Louisiana Overview. keyword: overview <http://lled.state.la.us>
- <sup>3</sup> Louisiana Office of Tourism. 1998. keywords: regional information <http://www.crt.state.la.us/crt/tourism.htm>
- <sup>4</sup> Police Jury Association of Louisiana. <http://www.lpgov.org/>
- <sup>5</sup> State Library of Louisiana. keyword: directories <http://smt.state.lib.la.us/>
- <sup>6</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1998. Population Estimates. 1998. keywords: parish name <http://www.census.gov/datamap/www/22.html>
- <sup>7</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1998. keywords: people, poverty, small area income and poverty estimates <http://www.census.gov>
- <sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration. 1999. keywords: economics and statistical administration <http://www.doc.gov>


**Region 7**

Bienville  
Bossier  
Caddo  
Claiborne  
DeSoto  
Natchitoches  
Red River  
Sabine  
Webster

**Region 8**

Caldwell  
East Carroll  
Franklin  
Jackson  
Lincoln  
Madison  
Morehouse  
Ouachita  
Richland  
Tensas  
Union  
West Carroll

**Region 9**

Livingston  
St. Helena  
St. Tammany  
Tangipahoa  
Washington

**Region 1**

Jefferson  
Orleans  
Plaquemines  
St. Bernard

**Region 2**

Ascension  
East Baton Rouge  
East Feliciana  
Iberville  
Pointe Coupee  
West Baton Rouge  
West Feliciana

**Region 3**

Assumption  
Lafourche  
St. Charles  
St. James  
St. John  
St. Mary  
Terrebonne

**Region 4**

Acadia  
Evangeline  
Iberia  
Lafayette  
St. Landry  
St. Martin  
Vermilion

**Region 5**

Allen  
Beauregard  
Calcasieu  
Cameron  
Jefferson Davis

**Region 6**

Avoyelles  
Catahoula  
Concordia  
Grant  
LaSalle  
Rapides  
Vernon  
Winn